



SR0221

LRB095 12273 GRL 36794 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Sandor Kirsche of Chicago, who passed away on April 27, 2007; and

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WHEREAS, Sandor Kirsche was born with the surname Kirschenbaum on January 24, 1926 in Hluboka, in the former Czechoslovakia; he was buried on April 30, 2007 on Har HaMenuchot in Jerusalem; and

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WHEREAS, Sandor Kirsche was a survivor of the Holocaust; for the first years of World War II, Mr. Kirsche lived in Hluboka; he later left to find work in Budapest, where he remained until April 1944, when he returned home; on the day after Passover, Hluboka's Jews were rounded up and taken to a ghetto in Uzhgorod; on May 26, 1944, Mr. Kirsche and the others were put onto cattle cars and taken to Auschwitz; he remained there with his younger brother and father for about a week, until they were taken to Buchenwald; from there, the three were sent to Magdeburg, a town about 50 miles from Berlin, to work as slave laborers building concrete bunkers; he was sent back to Buchenwald in March 1945; in April 1945, he and some 2,000 others were sent from Buchenwald on a death march; this march ended abruptly when the Nazi guards fled the group, followed by the surrender of Germany to the Allies on May 7, 1945; and

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1           WHEREAS, After the war, Sandor Kirsche attempted to travel  
2 to Palestine, a trip that fell through; he met a  
3 Yiddish-speaking American soldier from New York, who offered to  
4 help Mr. Kirsche find his relatives in Chicago; through a  
5 series of serendipitous occurrences, Mr. Kirsche and his new  
6 wife, Margit, were able to gain U.S. citizenship and make their  
7 way to Chicago; their first grocery store was in Humboldt Park;  
8 in 1971, Mr. Kirsche, with his son Ira, purchased a small deli  
9 meat market on Devon Avenue called Hungarian Kosher; he managed  
10 to bring his two older sisters and their families here from the  
11 Soviet Union in 1972; in 1985, Mr. Kirsche and his son moved  
12 the business to its present location in Skokie; as an enlarged,  
13 full-service supermarket, it may have been the first of its  
14 type in the country and became the largest in the Midwest;  
15 around 1993, a kosher wine department with an online presence,  
16 reputed to be the world's largest, was added; Mr. Kirsche's  
17 grandson Daniel joined the business around 2001; and

18           WHEREAS, Sandor and Margit Kirsche were recognized by  
19 Hillel Torah in Skokie as "Grandparents of the Year" in 1994;  
20 they were also honored by the Associated Talmud Torahs in 1999  
21 on the occasion of the initiation of a Department of Holocaust  
22 Studies; and

23           WHEREAS, Sandor Kirsche is survived by his wife, Margit;

1 his children, Ira Kirsche and Lynn Shapiro; and his numerous  
2 grandchildren, nieces, and nephews; therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL  
4 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with  
5 his family and friends, the passing of Sandor Kirsche; and be  
6 it further

7 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
8 presented to the family of Sandor Kirsche as an expression of  
9 our respect and sympathy.